

MOOSE JAW Board of Trade

Report of the Council

Presented to the Members at the
Annual Meeting, Monday,
January 9th, 1906

A feature of the settlement of the West is that settlers rush to new districts, and along new lines of railway, such districts being specially advertised. Older districts, with railway facilities, and with most desirable lands unoccupied, are often passed by, simply because the West is so vast that it is impossible for new settlers to know all the districts and realize what they are leaving behind. The Moose Jaw district, settled 23 years ago, was by many supposed to be all occupied, while in fact there were thousands of acres unoccupied to the north and west, as well as to the south of the City.

Moose Jaw, although the most important railway centre on the main line of the C.P.R. in the province of Saskatchewan, has been noted for its gradual growth on a sure basis. The Board of Trade, realizing that now was the time for action, in or-

der to maintain Moose Jaw's position as one of the leading cities in Saskatchewan, decided at its last annual meeting to secure the services of a Commissioner, in order to divert the tide of incoming settlers to the unoccupied lands north west of Moose Jaw to the Elbow of the Saskatchewan, and to fill up that most desirable belt of land south of Moose Jaw to the Couteau Hills, as well as to purchase lands in the immediate vicinity of the city, and thereby benefit the city as a whole by the increased amount of trade which such settlement would bring to the city. A large prosperous farming population, tributary to a city, is one of its best supports.

Early in March Hugh McKellar was engaged as such Commissioner, to devote his time specially to the work of the Board. The work has been carried on by the Commissioner, assisted by the Council of the Board, which consists of 24 members. The detailed work of this Executive Council has been published from time to time in the local papers, and will now only be reviewed in a general way.

The total number of members of the Board is 106, which comprises the principal business men and citizens of Moose Jaw.

A PROSPEROUS YEAR.

The year 1905 has passed into history as the most prosperous ever experienced in Moose Jaw. It is not

necessary to prove this statement by lengthy arguments. Conditions, known to all, speak for themselves. These conditions may be summed up as follows:—A great crop year; fine weather; remunerative prices for all farm products; increased buying powers of farmers; activity in all business and labor circles; inrush of new settlers; sharp advance in farm lands, as well as in all city property.

Confidence in the future, enterprise on the part of our business men, and public spirited action by our City Council have given new life, full of ambition and energy to the city, and impressed visitors with the fact that Moose Jaw is one of the best and most prosperous cities in the West. One of the greatest factors in helping to direct attention to the Moose Jaw district this year was the promise of a bountiful harvest. This promise was realized. The harvest was safely garnered, and, up to the end of the year, 520,000 bushels of wheat were marketed at Moose Jaw alone. At Boharm, 8 miles west of Moose Jaw 250,000 bushels were marketed; at Caron, 16 miles west of Moose Jaw, 275,000 bushels; at Pasqua, 7 miles east, 181,300 bushels; and at Belle Plaine 17 miles east, 192,274 bushels; making in all a grand total of 1,418,574 bushels from within a radius of 20 miles from Moose Jaw. Railway officials, experienced farmers and elevator men estimate that the total wheat crop of this year in

said district will considerably exceed 2,000,000 bushels.

The estimated wheat crop of Manitoba and the Territories this year is 85,000,000 bushels; one fortieth part of this yield is therefore raised within 20 miles of Moose Jaw.

VALUE OF CROPS.

The cash received for this wheat at 60 cents per bushel will amount to \$1,200,000 (a higher price has been received for the greater portion of what has already been disposed of). Add to this amount the proceeds from flax, oats, hay, potatoes, butter, hogs, sheep and fat cattle. at least \$300,000, and we have \$1,500,000 going into pockets of farmers within 20 miles of Moose Jaw for this year's crop.

The average yield of wheat is generally estimated at 30 bushels per acre. Oats averaged 85 bushels to the acre.

As the productive nature of our lands has become better known, they have become more sought after, and their value has at least increased \$5 an acre during the year, and yet these lands, located on the main line of the C.P.R., which provides the best transportation facilities in the Canadian West, and which is continually improving its service, are today a safer investment than are lands much less favorably located, yet selling at the same price.

It is well to remember also that Moose Jaw City and the Moose Jaw

district have no admixture of what is termed in western parlance a foreign element: Canadians, British and progressive United States settlers constitute 95 per cent or over of our citizens and settlers. The majority of sales that have been made during the year, within 15 miles of the city, have been to actual settlers, or, in many cases, to original settlers, residents of the district, who have decided to increase their land holdings before the price of land becomes too high.

The total assessment of the city in April last was \$2,916,840. The population is now estimated at over 6000. The expenditure on public works and new buildings during the year totals over \$850,000 of which \$230,000 was for municipal improvements, sewerage, electric lighting system, cement sidewalks, and other improvements. Railway improvements in this centre amount to \$150,000 on new machine shops, boiler house, freight sheds, and completion of stock yards, not including the outlay on the branch line north. Some of the public buildings erected during the year, with their cost, are as follows:

NEW BUILDINGS.

New School building \$43,000.

Post Office and Customs House combined \$30,000.

Masonic Temple, \$25,000.

Bank of Hamilton, \$35,000.

McRoberts Bros., new three story hotel \$40,000.

T. W. Robinson & Co., Ltd., doubling capacity of store, \$10,000.

Doctor Bros. store, \$10,000.

R. Harwood store, \$15,800.

Wm. & J. H. Grayson, Grayson brick block, four stores \$20,000.

N. J. Porter studio, brick \$8,000.

J. Simington, extension to brick block \$5,000.

Drs. Turnbull & McCulloch, extension to drug store, new offices, etc., \$10,000.

Mammoth Boarding House, containing forty rooms, erected by W. J. Williams, \$8,000.

And many enlargements and additions to stores and offices.

To these may be added sixty-five private residences, at a cost varying from \$2,000 to \$5,000 each; forty residences at a cost of from \$1,000 to \$2,000 each; and sixty at less than \$1,000 each.

A new skating rink, 82X200 feet, complete in every detail, has been erected; also a curling rink, 60X160 feet, at a total cost of \$10,000.

The present school accommodation twelve rooms is so inadequate that a new eight roomed high school building, one of the largest and most modern in Western Canada, is being erected. The expenditure on schools for the year totals \$55,000.

A few comparisons may be given to show the confidence which business men have in Moose Jaw's future:

The old Red Store, frame 34x30 feet, one story, becomes the new brick store, 50x70 feet, owned by

Doctor Bros., costing \$10,000.

The old Ottawa Hotel, frame, ten rooms, owned by the McRoberts Bros., becomes the new three story City Hotel, solid brick with stone foundation, and cement block front, 50x90 feet, 60 rooms, at a cost of \$40,000.

The old Bank of Hamilton, 15x30 feet, 8 foot ceiling, rented, is changed to a solid three story brick block with full basement, 27x121 feet, at a cost of \$35,000 owned by the Bank of Hamilton.

The old Post Office, rented room, 27x30 feet. New Post Office, 36 x 80 feet, three story with basement, solid brick with stone foundation, at a cost of \$30,000.

The city has been extending in all directions. South Hill, which two and a half years ago had no dwellings, is now a village in itself, requiring a new two roomed school house to accommodate the children residing in that portion of the city; that is, across Thunder Creek, south of the C.P.R. yards.

BUSINESS CHANGES.

Some of the business changes in the city may here be noted:

The Porto Rico Lumber Sompany bought out E. Simpson & Co., and has met with such success that their business has outgrown present quarters, and a new up-to-date factory is now in course of erection in the west end of the city.

The Great West Lumber Company,

Mr. Laurie manager, sold out to the Davidson-Fraser Company, while a new lumber firm, the Independent Lumber Company, has established an extensive lumber yard in the city.

Messrs. Knechtel, McKenzie & McNeil have bought out the furniture business of McLean & McIntyre.

Messrs Hockin & Siddons bought out the hardware firm of Mrs. McNab.

Messrs. McMicken & Truax have opened a new grocery and crockery store.

John J. Scott has opened a new bakery, and Mr. Biden a confectionery store.

The opening of the Jones boot and shoe store.

John Colling boot and shoe store, and repairing department, established during the year.

Steam Laundry Messrs. Maxwell and Jackson, managers.

It is a pleasure to note that all new buildings and improvements have been in the hands of contractors resident in the city, and that the labor has been done by resident mechanics.

Mention may also be made of the manufacture of cement blocks and cement pressed bricks for building purposes. A start has been made in this work - by Smith Bros., and Messrs. Little & Latimer, which will be much extended the coming year, as there is a demand for this class of material.

All the new firms that have located in the city are more than satis-

fied with the business done, and with the outlook for the future, while business men who have resided in Moose Jaw for years say that business with them has increased at least 50 per cent. and, in many cases, more than doubled that of last year.

EVIDENCES OF PROSPERITY.

The following memo is given as an index of the increasing volume of trade in Moose Jaw:—

On January 4th, 1905, there were cleared through Customs 522 postal parcels; on January 4th, 1906, there were 1072 postal parcels cleared customs.

The old telephone system was purchased in the spring by an enterprising American Company (Senator Young & Co. of Valley City, N. D.), who believed in following the many American farmers who were coming to Canada. The system now installed is so complete and up-to-date that, instead of the old being renovated, it is practically a new system from the ground up, new poles, new office, and new wires; a credit to any city. Expenditure thereon this season within the city, \$15,000. Long distance telephone lines to Regina; along the Soo line to Rouleau; and out to Buffalo Lake, among the farming settlements are features of the new system.

A Merchants' co-operative Fire Insurance Co. has been organized during the year, and is now doing business. Its headquarters are in Moose

Jaw, and Moose Jaw business men are its officers.

The following additional foreign Fire Insurance Companies, not previously represented, have established agents in Moose Jaw:—

German American of New York; The Insurance Company of North America, making in all some 35 companies represented in Moose Jaw.

When the Autonomy Bill of Saskatchewan was first introduced to parliament, the City of Moose Jaw was ignored; Moose Jaw City and Moose Jaw district being included in one electoral division. A strong protest was at once sent by the Board of Trade to our representatives in Ottawa, as well as to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, asking for representation as a city, the same as Regina and Prince Albert. The amended Bill gave us such standing and representation.

Nine months ago the branch line of railway to the north, on the way to the Elbow of the Saskatchewan although talked of for some years, was still in the realms of uncertainty. The Board of Trade took active measures to secure the early construction of this branch, and today we have the rails laid on 12 miles of the road, and arrangements made whereby farmers are shipping their wheat from the end of the track at a cost of 1 cent per 100 pounds extra on the Moose Jaw rates. Further extension of this line to the Elbow of the Saskatchewan is anticipated in 1906.

The Council of the Board has devoted much time and attention to the proposed spur track for warehouse purposes, and, although the track has not yet been completed, there is a great difference of sentiment and of fact between what existed in March last, when it was a question whether such a spur track was required, whether the C.P.R. could be induced to put it down, where it should be built, and at what cost; and today, when a desirable and convenient location from the new line of railway has been located, the cost being assumed by the City Council by an exchange of lots on the Minerva and Diana Crescents, with the company for the expense of building the track, and lastly the purchase of more than a dozen sites on the spur track, upon which warehouses are to be erected in the coming year.

ADVERTISING.

As funds in the hands of the executive for advertising purposes were limited, it was necessary to guard against what might appear as extravagance with no immediate returns. The grain pyramid at the station, and entertaining visitors have been the principal expenditures in advertising during the year. The grain pyramid was a success, as it showed to the thousands of travelers who passed through our city, especially the many Americans on their way to or from Portland, what

our fields yielded. The entertainment of visitors, notably the Vice Regal party on their way to Edmonton; the United States Agricultural editors, and the Irish Guards Band, was a credit to the city, many of the citizens taking their private rigs to drive out among the wheat fields. This is the best kind of advertising, for reporters, accompanying such parties, could not but write of what they saw, and such reports are read; they are not paid ads. The Council of the Board has always given your Commissioner authority to drive out any party, reporters or otherwise, who wished to see for themselves what our farms and crops are like. In this way also many columns, descriptive of our city and district, appeared in the public press, at but little cost to the Board.

Your Commissioner has from time to time written articles for various publications, descriptive of the city and district. These articles have been the means of bringing many inquiries for further information, with the result that business firms and settlers have been induced to locate in our midst.

GOOD CREDIT.

The credit of the city is illustrated by the sale on Dec. 18th of \$30,000 fifty year debentures, payable in equal annual payments, principal and interest combined, for \$31,703. This is perhaps the best sale of debentures hitherto recorded in the West.

Eastern Loan Corporations and Capitalists are seeking investments in farm land securities, and are eager to loan on city property at moderate rates of interest.

The older established loan companies that are represented in the city, having unbounded confidence in land values in the Moose Jaw district, and in Moose Jaw City realty, have been granting much higher advances on securities during recent years than formerly, by reason of the proportionate increase of the market values of the securities offered.

BUILDING FOR 1906.

A brief sketch of buildings projected for the coming year may not be out of place:

The Canadian Bank of Commerce has already a foundation laid for a new building, 82X70 feet, three story stone building, with basement; estimated cost, \$35,000.

The Pioneer Lumber and Implement Company, Ltd., I. Woodley, president; F. J. Grobb, vice-president; G. B. C. Sharpe, managing director, have combined their forces, forming a joint stock company, capitalized at \$100,000 of which \$50,000 is paid up. They are building commodious warehouses, three stories, costing \$12,000.

There are many projects to be entertained the coming year. Some have been considered during the past year with no practical results. They have not been lost sight of, al-

though they have not been referred to in this report.

The city is doing well. It now rests with the citizens to keep abreast with the tide of prosperity which has set in. As an important centre in the new province of Saskatchewan, it should be our special duty to see that justice be done to Moose Jaw in the location of public institutions, which necessarily follows the administration of the new province. All Moose Jaw asks for is her rights.

Moose Jaw is noted for its law-abiding citizens. Efficient city police, as well as mounted police located here, preserve law and order most effectually.

While the Board of Trade only interests itself with business matters a general report of the city for the year would not be complete without reference to some other matters. Comment has been made on our schools, and the school accommodation which is being provided. Our churches, although commodious and well supported, are no longer large enough to accommodate church goers. One of the strongest church bodies in the city, the Methodists, has decided on erecting a much larger church in 1906 than the one in use at present, although only built five years ago. A branch of the Y. M. C. A. has been organized, and, having secured commodious apartments in the Masonic Block, is now fully

equipped for all work of such an institution.

The thanks of the Board is heartily tendered to the City Council for favors promptly granted, a Board room, light and heating free of charge, and an appropriation to cover the expense of furnishing the room; to the C.P.R. Company for information given from time to time re grain and other statistics; and to farmers and elevator men who freely supplied grain for exhibition purposes.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

W. LOREE,
President.

HUGH McKELLAR,
Commissioner.



